

Biggest Private Donation to Date for the Environment

Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa, Chairman of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, who was recently awarded the United Nations Peace Prize in a ceremony at the Geneva headquarters of the World Health Organization, [subsequently pledged] \$1,000,000 to the United Nations Environment Programme. The money will finance [an international award] for outstanding achievement in the field of the environment.

Mr Sasakawa's concern for the environment is also reflected in his support for the Institute for Ocean Environmental Technology of the Japan Foundation for Shipbuilding Advancement at Tsukuba, and for the International Federation of Institutes for Advanced Study (IFIAS) in Sweden, which is an organization that specializes in environmental studies.

The donation to UNEP is only the latest of a long series of important contributions by Mr Sasakawa to humanitarian efforts all over the world—particularly through the United Nations system. During the past seven years, through the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, he has provided annual donations to WHO totalling over \$20,000,000, and constituting significant support for the eradication of smallpox, the control of leprosy, and other important health programmes.

Between 1971 and 7 May 1982, Mr Sasakawa donated more than \$36,231,000 to various United Nations agencies and organizations—including the UN Secretariat, UNHCR, UNRWA, IMCO, and ESCAP—in his

efforts to improve human welfare, alleviate suffering, and promote international understanding. These are goals which illustrate his personal philosophy: 'The world is one family: all mankind are brothers and sisters'.

Among his direct efforts to help preserve world peace, Mr Sasakawa supports the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, the present Chairman of which is Mr Olof Palme, former Prime Minister of Sweden. Mr Sasakawa was a member of the Japanese delegation to the UNESCO Peace Forum in Paris in 1979, where he proposed the creation of a nongovernmental commission for peace. The Forum also accepted his offer to establish a peace fund and annual Peace Education Prize.

Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa, the eldest son of a *sake* brewer, was born on 4 May 1899 near Osaka, and was an elected member of the Japanese Diet or Parliament until the end of World War II. He is chairman of more than 50 non-profit organizations—including the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, which has given more than \$12 thousand millions in donations and subsidies to various causes over the past 20 years.

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'TRAFFIC Japan' Office to Halt Illegal Wildlife Trade

In a move which could have major consequences for world conservation, WWF/IUCN will open a new Tokyo office called 'TRAFFIC Japan'. The office will be modelled on similar operations in the US, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the UK, and follows the decision by Japan to accept the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Japan is a key figure in many aspects of wildlife trade, and the new TRAFFIC (acronym for Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna In Commerce) office will work closely with customs authorities to see that the CITES regulations are strictly enforced. A Japanese-speaking American conservationist, Thomas Milliken, will be in day-to-day charge of operations, reporting to Mr Hyosuke Kujiraoka, former Director of the Japanese Government's Environmental Protection Agency. TRAFFIC is backed by a strong Scientific Advisory Committee headed by Dr Hideo Obara, one of Japan's leading zoologists and a member of the Board of WWF Japan.

Mr Eugène Lapointe, recently appointed Secretary-General of CITES, described the opening of TRAFFIC Japan as 'a major step towards the development of the awareness required for international cooperation in controlling the trade in endangered species; awareness and cooperation are two absolutely key elements in the attainment of our objectives.' For Japan, after the US, is the world's largest consumer of wildlife and, on a *per caput* basis, may be number one. Approximately one-third of the world trade in birds involves Japan, and almost all of the musk and most of the tortoise-shell in

world trade is consumed by Japan. Moreover, next to the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan is the largest trader in fur-skins of wild species, and is a leading importer of shells, coral, reptile skins, primates, butterflies, and tropical fishes. In short, the Japanese are deeply involved in almost every area of wildlife trade, and according to Mr Milliken their stockpiling of furs, which occurred before the acceptance of CITES, guarantees that endangered species will continue to be traded for some time to come.

The Japanese are also the world's largest consumers of ivory. Eighty per cent of African raw ivory exports are to Japan or Hong Kong. Until recently, Japan was a major trafficker in rhinoceros horn as well, importing an average of 800 kilograms annually. Thus, public awareness regarding endangered species issues is very low in Japan, and TRAFFIC will play a major educational role in publicizing CITES and the world trade in threatened wildlife.

Dr Obara's above-mentioned Scientific Advisory Committee will be largely responsible for assisting in the identification of wildlife and derivative products, accumulating and interpreting data, reviewing and evaluating TRAFFIC reports and projects, and distributing TRAFFIC reports and newsletters.

David Mitchell, *Director of Public Affairs*
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